



**Adams County, Idaho,
Wildland-Urban Interface
Wildfire Mitigation Plan
Executive Summary
January 26, 2004**

Vision: *Institutionalize and promote a countywide wildfire hazard mitigation ethic through leadership, professionalism, and excellence, leading the way to a safe, sustainable Adams County.*



This plan was developed by the Adams County Wildland-Urban Interface Wildfire Mitigation Plan Committee in cooperation with Northwest Management, Inc., 233 E. Palouse River Dr., P.O. Box 9748, Moscow, ID, 83843, Tel: 208-883-4488, www.Consulting-Foresters.com

Acknowledgments

This Wildland-Urban Interface Wildfire Mitigation Plan represents the efforts and cooperation of a number of organizations and agencies, through the commitment of people working together to improve the preparedness for wildfire events while reducing factors of risk.



Adams County Commissioners
and the employees of Adams County



West Central Highlands of Idaho Resource
Conservation and Development Association



USDI Bureau of Land Management
Lower Snake River District



USDA Forest Service
Payette National Forest



Idaho Department of Lands
Payette Lakes Area
And
Southern Idaho Timber Protective Association

Council Volunteer Fire Department
Indian Valley Volunteer Fire Department
Meadows Valley Volunteer Fire Department
Salmon River Rural Fire Department
McCall Fire Protection District
&

Local Businesses and
Citizens of Adams County

To obtain copies of this plan contact:

Adams County Commissioners Office
Adams County Courthouse
201 Industrial
Council, ID 83612

This **Executive Summary** is a synopsis of the full Adams County Wildland-Urban Interface Wildfire Mitigation Plan. This Executive Summary includes only information about the guiding principles used to develop this plan and the recommendations made. For the full document and its Appendices, please contact the Adams County Commissioners Office.

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Chapter I: Overview of this Plan and its Development

1 Introduction

This Wildland-Urban Interface Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan for Adams County, Idaho, is the result of analyses, professional cooperation and collaboration, assessments of wildfire risks and other factors considered with the intent to reduce the potential for wildfires to threaten people, structures, infrastructure, and unique ecosystems in Adams County, Idaho. The planning team responsible for implementing this project was led by the Adams County Commissioners. Agencies and organizations that participated in the planning process included:

- USDI Bureau of Land Management (also providing funding through the National Fire Plan)
- USDA Forest Service
- Idaho Department of Lands
- Southern Idaho Timber Protective Association
- West Central Highlands Resource Conservation and Development Council
- Boise (the company formerly known as Boise Cascade Corp.)
- Midvale Fire District
- Indian Valley Fire District
- Council Valley Fire #1
- Meadows Valley Fire District
- McCall Fire Protection District
- Salmon River Rural Fire Department
- Northwest Management, Inc.

The Adams County Commissioners solicited competitive bids from companies to provide the service of leading the assessment and the writing of the **Adams County Wildland-Urban Interface Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan**. The Commissioners selected Northwest Management, Inc., to provide this service. Northwest Management, Inc., is a professional natural resources consulting firm located in Moscow, Idaho. The Project Manager from Northwest Management, Inc., was Dr. William E. Schlosser, a professional forester and regional planner. The County also hired a local coordinator to serve as liaison between Northwest Management, Inc., and the Commissioner's Office, local citizenry, and others. The County hired Rick Belnap, a resident of New Meadows, a retired USDA Forest Service employee, who also works part-time with the Idaho Department of Lands.

This Wildland-Urban Interface Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan has been prepared in compliance with:

- The National Fire Plan; A Collaborative Approach for Reducing Wildland Fire Risks to Communities and the Environment 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan—May 2002.
- The Idaho Statewide Implementation Strategy for the National Fire Plan—July 2002.

- The Federal Emergency Management Agency's Region 10 guidelines for a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan as defined in 44 CFR parts 201 and 206, and as related to a fire mitigation plan chapter of a Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan.

“When implemented, the 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy will contribute to reducing the risks of wildfire to communities and the environment by building collaboration at all levels of government.”

- The NFP 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy August 2001

1.1 Goals and Guiding Principles

The Wildland-Urban Interface Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan for Adams County takes its targeted outcomes simultaneously from the combination of the National Fire Plan, the Idaho Statewide Implementation Strategy for the National Fire Plan, and FEMA Region 10 guidelines for the review process for local hazard mitigation plans. The objective of combining these three complimentary guidelines is to facilitate an integrated wildland fire risk assessment, identify pre-hazard mitigation activities, and prioritize activities and efforts to achieve the protection of people, structures, the environment, and significant infrastructure in Adams County.

1.1.1 National Fire Plan Philosophy

The goals of this Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Mitigation Plan include:

1. Improve Fire Prevention and Suppression
2. Reduce Hazardous Fuels
3. Restore Fire-Adapted Ecosystems
4. Promote Community Assistance

Its three guiding principles are:

1. Priority setting that emphasizes the protection of communities and other high-priority watersheds at-risk
2. Collaboration among governments and broadly representative stakeholders
3. Accountability through performance measures and monitoring for results.

This Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Mitigation Plan documents the County's intentions in meeting the National Fire Plan's 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy and the Idaho Statewide Implementation Strategy for the National Fire Plan. The projects and activities recommended under this plan are in addition to other Federal, state, and private / corporate forest and rangeland management activities. The implementation plan does not alter, diminish, or expand the existing jurisdiction, statutory and regulatory responsibilities and authorities or budget processes of participating Federal, State, and tribal agencies.

By endorsing this implementation plan, all signed parties (Section 5.3) agree that reducing the threat of wildland fire to people, communities, and ecosystems will require:

- Firefighter and public safety continuing as the highest priority.
- A sustained, long-term and cost-effective investment of resources by all public and private parties, recognizing overall budget parameters affecting Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments.

- A unified effort to implement the collaborative framework called for in the Strategy in a manner that ensures timely decisions at each level.
- Accountability for measuring and monitoring performance and outcomes, and a commitment to factoring findings into future decision making activities.
- The achievement of national goals through action at the local level with particular attention on the unique needs of cross-boundary efforts and the importance of funding on-the-ground activities.
- Communities and individuals in the wildland-urban interface to initiate personal stewardship and volunteer actions that will reduce wildland fire risks.
- Management activities, both in the wildland-urban interface and in at-risk areas across the broader landscape.
- Active forestland and rangeland management, including thinning that produces commercial or pre-commercial products, biomass removal and utilization, prescribed fire and other fuels reduction tools to simultaneously meet long-term ecological, economic, and community objectives.

The National Fire Plan identifies a three-tiered organization structure including 1) the local level, 2) state/regional and tribal level, and 3) the national level. This plan adheres to the collaboration and outcomes consistent with a local level plan. Local level collaboration involves participants with direct responsibility for management decisions affecting public and/or private land and resources, fire protection responsibilities, or good working knowledge and interest in local resources. Participants in this planning process include Tribal representatives, local representatives from Federal and State agencies, local governments, landowners and other stakeholders, and community-based groups with a demonstrated commitment to achieving the strategy's four goals. Existing resource advisory committees, watershed councils, or other collaborative entities may serve to achieve coordination at this level. Local involvement, expected to be broadly representative, is a primary source of planning, project prioritization, and resource allocation and coordination at the local level. The role of the private citizen is not to be under estimated, as their input and contribution to all phases of risk assessments, mitigation activities, and project implementation is greatly facilitated by their involvement.

1.1.1.1 Identifying and Prioritizing Communities at Risk

The following was prepared by the National Association of State Foresters, June 27, 2003, and is included here as a reference for the identification of prioritizing treatments between communities.

Purpose: To provide national, uniform guidance for implementing the provisions of the "Collaborative Fuels Treatment" MOU, and to satisfy the requirements of Task e, Goal 4 of the Implementation Plan for the 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy.

Intent: The intent is to establish broad, nationally compatible standards for identifying and prioritizing communities at risk, while allowing for maximum flexibility at the state and regional level. Three basic premises are:

- Include all lands and all ownerships.
- Use a collaborative process that is consistent with the complexity of land ownership patterns, resource management issues, and the number of interested stakeholders.
- Set priorities by evaluating projects, not by ranking communities.

References:

1. *A Collaborative Approach for Reducing Wildland Fire Risks to Communities and the Environment. 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan.* May 2002. (Goal 4 Task e: "Develop nationally comparable definitions for identifying at-risk wildland urban interface communities and a process for prioritizing communities within state and tribal jurisdiction.") (Available at: <http://www.fireplan.gov/reports>).
2. *Memorandum of Understanding for the Development of a Collaborative Fuels Treatment Program.* January 13, 2003. (Available at: <http://www.fireplan.gov/reports>).
3. *Concept Paper: Communities at Risk.* National Association of State Foresters (NASF), December 2, 2002. (Available at: <http://www.stateforesters.org/reports>).
4. *Wildland/Urban Interface Fire Hazard Assessment Methodology.* NWCG, undated (circa 1997). (Available through the NWCG Publications Management System (PMS), NIFC Catalog number NFES 1597.)

Definition – Community at Risk: For the purpose of this document, a community is defined as "a group of people living in the same locality and under the same government" (*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 1969). A community is considered at risk from wildland fire if it lies within the wildland/urban interface as defined in the federal register (*FR Vol. 66, No. 3, Pages 751-754, January 4, 2001*).

1.1.2 Federal Emergency Management Agency Philosophy

Effective November 1, 2004, a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is required for Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program (PDM) eligibility. The HMGP and PDM program provide funding, through state emergency management agencies, to support local mitigation planning and projects to reduce potential disaster damages.

The new local hazard mitigation plan requirements for HMGP and PDM eligibility is based on the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, which amended the Stafford Disaster Relief Act to promote and integrated, cost effective approach to mitigation. Local hazard mitigation plans must meet the minimum requirements of the Stafford Act-Section 322, as outlined in the criteria contained in 44 CFR Part 201. The plan criteria covers the planning process, risk assessment, mitigation strategy, plan maintenance, and adoption requirements.

FEMA will only review a local hazard mitigation plan submitted through the appropriate State Hazard Mitigation Officer (SHMO). Draft versions of local hazard mitigation plans will not be reviewed by FEMA. FEMA will review the final version of a plan prior to local adoption to determine if the plan meets the criteria, but FEMA will be unable to approve it prior to adoption. In Idaho the SHMO is:

Idaho Bureau of Disaster Services
4040 Guard Street, Bldg 600
Boise, ID 83705
Jonathan Perry, 208-334-2336 Ext. 271

A FEMA designed plan will be evaluated on its adherence to a variety of criteria.

- Adoption by the Local Governing Body
- Multi-jurisdictional Plan Adoption
- Multi-jurisdictional Planning Participation
- Documentation of Planning Process
- Identifying Hazards

- Profiling Hazard Events
- Assessing Vulnerability: Identifying Assets
- Assessing Vulnerability: Estimating Potential Losses
- Assessing Vulnerability: Analyzing Development Trends
- Multi-Jurisdictional Risk Assessment
- Local Hazard Mitigation Goals
- Identification and Analysis of Mitigation Measures
- Implementation of Mitigation Measures
- Multi-Jurisdictional Mitigation Strategy
- Monitoring, Evaluating, and Updating the Plan
- Implementation Through Existing Programs
- Continued Public Involvement

1.1.3 Adams County Planning Effort and Philosophy

The goals of this planning process include the integration of the National Fire Plan, the Idaho Statewide Implementation Strategy, and meets the requirements of FEMA for a county-wide Fire Mitigation Plan; a component of the County's All Hazards Mitigation Plan. This effort will utilize the best and most appropriate science from all partners, the integration of local and regional knowledge about wildfire risks and fire behavior, while meeting the needs of local citizens, the regional economy, the significance of this region to the rest of Idaho and the Inland West.

1.1.3.1 Mission Statement

To make Adams County residents, communities, state agencies, local governments, and businesses less vulnerable to the negative effects of wildland fires through the effective administration of wildfire hazard mitigation grant programs, hazard risk assessments, wise and efficient fuels treatments, and a coordinated approach to mitigation policy through federal, state, regional, and local planning efforts. Our combined prioritization will be the protection of people, structures, infrastructure, and unique ecosystems that contribute to our way of life and the sustainability of the local and regional economy.

1.1.3.2 Vision Statement

Institutionalize and promote a countywide wildfire hazard mitigation ethic through leadership, professionalism, and excellence, leading the way to a safe, sustainable Adams County.

1.1.3.3 Goals

- To reduce the area of WUI land burned and losses experienced because of wildfires where these fires threaten communities in the wildland-urban interface
- Prioritize the protection of people, structures, infrastructure, and unique ecosystems that contribute to our way of life and the sustainability of the local and regional economy
- Educate communities about the unique challenges of wildfire in the wildland-urban interface (WUI)
- Establish mitigation priorities and develop mitigation strategies in the WUI
- Strategically locate, plan, and implement fuel reduction projects

- Provide recommendations for alternative treatment methods, such as modifying forest stand density, herbicide treatments, fuel reduction techniques, and disposal or removal of treated slash
- Meet or exceed the requirements of the National Fire Plan and FEMA for a County level Fire Mitigation Plan

Chapter 4: Treatment Recommendations

4 Overview

Critical to the implementation of this Wildland-Urban Interface Wildfire Mitigation Plan will be the identification of, and implementation of, an integrated schedule of treatments targeted at achieving an elimination of the lives lost, and reduction in structures destroyed, infrastructure compromised, and unique ecosystems damaged that serve to sustain the way-of-life and economy of Adams County and the region. Since there are many land management agencies and hundreds of private landowners in Adams County, it is reasonable to expect that differing schedules of adoption will be made and varying degrees of compliance will be observed across all ownerships.

The Federal land management agencies in Adams County, specifically the USDA Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management, are participants in this planning process and have contributed to its development. Where available, their schedule of WUI treatments has been summarized in this section to better facilitate a correlation between their identified planning efforts and the efforts of Adams County.

This chapter of the plan will be separated into a few, logical sections grouping like activities together. Section 4.2 will summarize the US Forest Service's proposed treatments in Adams County, section 4.3 details policy and safety proposals, section 4.4 explores activities related to people and structure protection, section 4.5 looks at infrastructure improvements, section 4.6 explores fire fighting resources and capabilities, while 4.7 makes recommendations linked to land management. These six sections of this chapter are intended to address, together, the interrelated components making up the WUI issues for Adams County with recommendations. Proposals in this chapter have been generated from the preceding chapters where the detailed risk assessments were made.

All risk assessments were made based on the conditions existing during 2003, thus, the recommendations in this section have been made in light of those conditions. However, the components of wildfire risk and the preparedness of the county's resources are not static. It will be necessary to fine-tune this plan's recommendations annually to adjust for changes in the components of risk, population density changes, infrastructure modifications, and other factors.

As part of the Policy of Adams County in relation to this planning document, this entire **Wildland-Urban Interface Wildfire Mitigation Plan** should be reviewed annually at a special meeting of the Adams County Commissioners, open to the public, where action items, priorities, budgets, and modifications can be made or confirmed. A written review of the plan should be approved by the Chairman of the County Commissioners, detailing plans for the year's activities, and made available to the general public ahead of the meeting (in accord with the Idaho Open Public Meeting Laws). Amendments to the plan should be detailed at this meeting, documented, and attached to the formal plan as an amendment to the WUI Wildfire Mitigation Plan (signatures by the cooperators would be collected at the Chairman's discretion). Re-evaluation of this plan should be made on the 5th anniversary of its acceptance, and every 5-year period following.

Prioritization of activities recommended in this plan should be made by the Adams County Commissioners. During the annual review of this plan, reprioritization can be justified in response to changing conditions and funding opportunities.

4.1 Possible Fire Mitigation Activities

As part of the implementation of fire mitigation activities in Adams County, a variety of management tools may be used. Management tools include but are not limited to the following:

- Homeowner and landowner education
- Policy changes for structures and infrastructure in the WUI
- Home site defensible zone through fuels modification
- Community defensible zone fuels alteration
- Access improvements
- Access creation
- Emergency response enhancements (training, equipment, locating new fire stations, new fire districts)
- Regional land management recommendations for private, state, and federal landowners

Sound risk management is a foundation for all fire management activities. Risks and uncertainties relating to fire management activities must be understood, analyzed, communicated, and managed as they relate to the cost of either doing or not doing an activity. Net gains to the public benefit will be an important component of decisions.

4.2 Proposed Projects Being Developed by the US Forest Service in Adams County

The Payette National Forest manages much of the highest risk lands in the region. As shown on the area maps, Appendix I, the USFS manages the majority of the area in Adams County. Their staff of resource and fire professionals has conducted analysis and developed management projects in the WUI, that are designed to reduce the risk of wildfire and the risk of WUI losses from those fires.

Table 4.1 lists nine WUI treatment projects in Adams County, developed by the Payette National Forest. Table 4.2 shows their anticipated implementation schedule as of the preparation of this document. All of these projects are aligned with the County's WUI Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan's Mission, Vision, and Goals as enumerated in this document. Additional treatments in the County are justified, and will be targeted at amplifying these efforts. For instance, a community defensibility project may be recommended for areas immediately adjacent to one of the Forest Service's treatment areas so that the two projects compliment each other.

Table 4.1. US Forest Service WUI treatments being considered in Adams County, Idaho.

Project	Summary (Purpose and need)	Benefit to the Community	Location	Description	Acres
Middle Little Salmon (Circle C Ranch Subdivision)	Reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest health by changing Condition Class along Forest Boundary, adjacent to Wildland Urban Interface	Decrease the risk of a wildland fire burning structures or forest resources. Provide economic opportunities through timber sale/mechanical treatment.	National Forest System Lands adjacent to the Circle C Ranch Subdivision, approximately 10 miles north of New Meadows.	Treat approximately 605 acres of National Forest System Lands with mechanical harvest/thinning and prescribed fire to reduce the risk of crown fire, improve firefighter and public safety, and improve Condition Class/forest health	605 acres
Meadows Slope	Reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest health by changing Condition Class along Forest Boundary, adjacent to Wildland Urban Interface	Decrease the risk of a wildland fire burning structures or forest resources. Provide economic opportunities through timber sale/mechanical treatment.	National Forest System Lands adjacent to the Timber Ridge, Rock Flat, King's Pine, and Crescent Rim Subdivisions and additional private property east of New Meadows.	Treat approximately 6480 acres of National Forest System Lands with mechanical harvest/thinning and prescribed fire to reduce the risk of crown fire, improve firefighter and public safety, and improve Condition Class/forest health	6480 acres
Rapid River	Reduce hazardous fuels, improve forest health by changing Condition Classes, improve wildlife habitat, and improve watershed integrity	Decrease the risk of a wildland fire destroying the Rapid River watershed. Improve fisheries habitat. Improve hunting opportunities.	National Forest System Lands within the Rapid River Drainage on the Payette National Forest.	Treat approximately 2000-2500 acres annually or biennially with prescribed fire to reduce the risk of large wildfires and improve wildlife habitat	18,200 acres
Pinehurst I	Reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest health by changing Condition Class along Forest Boundary, adjacent to Wildland Urban Interface	Decrease the risk of a wildland fire burning structures or forest resources. Provide economic opportunities through timber sale/mechanical treatment.	National Forest System Lands adjacent to the private property and other federally/state owned land west of Pinehurst.	Treat approximately 800 acres of National Forest System Lands with mechanical harvest/thinning and prescribed fire to reduce the risk of crown fire, improve firefighter and public safety, and improve Condition Class/forest health	800 acres

Table 4.1. US Forest Service WUI treatments being considered in Adams County, Idaho.

Project	Summary (Purpose and need)	Benefit to the Community	Location	Description	Acres
Surprise Gulch	Reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest health by changing Condition Class along Forest Boundary, adjacent to Wildland Urban Interface	Decrease the risk of a wildland fire burning structures or forest resources. Provide economic opportunities through timber sale/mechanical treatment.	National Forest System Lands adjacent to private property around the community of Evergreen.	Treat approximately 800 acres of National Forest System Lands with mechanical harvest/thinning and prescribed fire to reduce the risk of crown fire, improve firefighter and public safety, and improve Condition Class/forest health	800 acres
Starkey	Reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest health by changing Condition Class along Forest Boundary, adjacent to Wildland Urban Interface	Decrease the risk of a wildland fire burning structures or forest resources. Provide economic opportunities through timber sale/mechanical treatment.	National Forest System Lands adjacent to the private property and other federally/state owned land north of Starkey and Fruitvale.	Treat approximately 800 acres of National Forest System Lands with mechanical harvest/thinning and prescribed fire to reduce the risk of crown fire, improve firefighter and public safety, and improve Condition Class/forest health	800 acres
Green Hornet	Reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest health by changing Condition Class along Forest Boundary, adjacent to Wildland Urban Interface	Decrease the risk of a wildland fire burning structures or forest resources. Provide economic opportunities through timber sale/mechanical treatment.	National Forest System Lands adjacent to the private property and other state owned land west of Peck Mountain, along West Mill Creek.	Treat approximately 2000 acres of National Forest System Lands with mechanical harvest/thinning and prescribed fire to reduce the risk of crown fire, improve firefighter and public safety, and improve Condition Class/forest health	Approx. 2000
Cuprum	Reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest health by changing Condition Class along Forest Boundary, adjacent to Wildland Urban Interface	Decrease the risk of a wildland fire burning structures or forest resources. Provide economic opportunities through timber sale/mechanical treatment.	National Forest System Lands adjacent to private property around the community of Cuprum.	Treat approximately 2000 acres of National Forest System Lands with mechanical harvest/thinning and prescribed fire to reduce the risk of crown fire, improve firefighter and public safety, and improve Condition Class/forest health	Approx. 2000

Table 4.1. US Forest Service WUI treatments being considered in Adams County, Idaho.

Project	Summary (Purpose and need)	Benefit to the Community	Location	Description	Acres
Brundage Mt. WUI Fuel treatments.	Reduce the spread of wildfires and impacts to private inholdings in the wildland/urban interface. Reduce the amount of live fuel so that if a wildfire were to occur or encroach it would burn as a surface fire rather than a crown fire.	Decrease the risk of wildfire encroaching on ski area improvements.	National Forest System Lands within and adjacent to Brundage Mt. Ski Area.	Treat up to 1000 acres of National Forest System Lands with mechanical harvest/thinning, piling and prescribed fire to reduce the risk of crown fire, improve firefighter and public safety and alter condition class.	Up to 1000 acres

Table 4.2. USFS WUI Project Development and Implementation Timeframes.

Project	Planning Timeframe*	Implementation Timeframe*
Middle Little Salmon (Circle C Ranch Subdivision)	FEIS signed in 2003.	Begin implementation in Spring/Summer of 2004. Finish implementation in 2005.
Meadows Slope	Complete DEIS by January 2004, FEIS by June 2004	Begin implementation in Fall of 2004. Finish implementation in 2008
Rapid River	Planning complete in 1997. Supplemental Information Report complete in 2003.	Annually or biennially, burn approximately 2000-2500 acres until complete
Pinehurst I	Complete CE by Fall 2004	Begin implementation in Fall of 2004. Finish implementation in Spring/Summer of 2005
Surprise Gulch	Complete EA/EIS by Fall 2005	Begin implementation in Fall 2006. Finish implementation in Fall 2007.
Starkey	Complete CE/EA by Fall 2006	Begin implementation in Fall 2007.
Green Hornet	Complete CE by Fall 2003	Begin implementation in Spring/Summer of 2004. Finish implementation in 2005.
Cuprum	Complete CE by Fall 2004	Begin implementation in Spring/Summer of 2005. Finish implementation in 2006.
Brundage Mt. WUI Fuel treatments.	Unknown at this time.	Unknown at this time.

4.3 WUI Safety & Policy

Wildfire mitigation efforts must be supported by a set of policies and regulations at the county level that maintain a solid foundation for safety and consistency. The recommendations enumerated here serve that purpose. Because these items are regulatory in nature, they will not necessarily be accompanied by cost estimates. These recommendations are policy related in nature and therefore are recommendations to the appropriate elected officials; debate and formulation of alternatives will serve to make these recommendations suitable and appropriate.

Table 4.3. WUI Action Items in Safety and Policy.

Action Item	Goals and Objectives	Responsible Organization	Action Items & Planning Horizon
4.3.a: Amend existing building codes to apply equally to new single housing construction as it does to sub-divisions.	Protection of people and structures by applying a standard of road widths, access, and building regulations to insure new homes can be protected while curtailing risks to firefighters (defensible space, access mgmt, water systems, building codes, signage, and maintenance of private forest and range lands)	County Commissioners in cooperation with Rural Fire Districts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1 debate and adoption of revised code (2004). • Review adequacy of changes annually, make changes as needed.

Table 4.3. WUI Action Items in Safety and Policy.

Action Item	Goals and Objectives	Responsible Organization	Action Items & Planning Horizon
4.3.b: Rural Addressing Update	Protection of people and structures by improving database of structures in the county which will link to fire fighting efforts and improved response times. Also linked to developing an enhanced 911 system.	County Planning and Zoning office in cooperation with the County Commissioners Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be implemented during first year (2004), pending funding and adoption by elected officials. May take most of a year to complete. Estimate cost at around \$45,000 to complete entire county
4.3.c: Enhanced 911 Service	Protection of people and structures by improving the ability of emergency response personnel to respond to an emergency.	County Commissioners in combination with County Sheriff's Office, County Assessor's Office and Fire Departments.	Can be completed only after the Rural Addressing project is completed. Target implementation during year 3 (2006) of this project.
4.3.d: Rural Signage (Road Signs & Rural Fire District Boundary Signs) Improvements across the county	Protection of people, structures, and infrastructure by improving the ability of emergency services personnel, residents, and visitors to navigate roads.	County Roads Department in cooperation with County Commissioners and Rural Fire Departments	Can be completed during year 1 (2004) pending funding to implement the project. Estimate \$15,000 for signs and posting.
4.3.e: Develop County policy concerning building materials used in high-risk WUI areas on existing structures and new construction	Protection of people and structures by improving the ability of emergency response personnel to respond to threatened homes in high-risk areas.	County Commissioners Office in cooperation with Rural Fire Departments	Year 1 (2004) activity: Consider and develop policy to address construction materials for homes and businesses located in high wildfire risk areas. Specifically, a County policy concerning wooden roofing materials and flammable siding, especially where juxtaposed near heavy wildland fuels.
4.3.f: Develop a formal WUI Advisory Committee to advise County Commissioners on WUI Issues and Treatments	Protection of people and structures by improving the ability of decision makers to make informed decisions about wildfire issues.	County Commissioners Office	Year 1 (2004) activity: Formalize a committee, its membership and service decided on by the County Commissioners, to collaborate on WUI issues within Adams County. Members potentially to include land management organizations and companies, private landowners, and fire protection personnel.

4.4 People and Structures

The protection of people and structures will be tied together closely as the loss of life in the event of a wildland fire is generally linked to a person who could not, or did not, flee a structure threatened by a wildfire. The other incident is a fire fighter who suffers the loss of life during the combating of a fire. Many of the recommendations in this section will define a set of criteria for implementation while others will be rather specific in extent and application.

Many of the recommendations in this section involve education and increasing awareness of the residents of Adams County. These recommendations stem from a variety of factors including items that became obvious during the analysis of the public surveys, discussions during public meetings, and observations about choices made by residents living in the Wildland-Urban Interface. Over and over, the a common theme was present that pointed to a situation of landowners not recognizing risk factors:

- Homeowners in the public mail survey ranked their home site wildfire risk factors significantly lower than a random sample of home rankings completed by fire mitigation specialists
- Fire District personnel pointed to numerous examples of inadequate access to homes of people who believe they have adequate ingress
- Discussions with the general public indicated an awareness of wildland fire risk, but they could not generally identify risk factors
- A preponderance of the respondents to the public mail survey indicated (58%) that they want to participate in educational opportunities focused on the WUI and what they can do to increase their home's chances of surviving a wildfire.

In addition to those items enumerated in Table 4.4, residents and policy makers of Adams County should recognize certain factors that exist today, that in their absence would lead to an increase in the risk factors associated with wildland fires in the WUI of Adams County. These items listed below should be encouraged, acknowledged, and recognized for their contributions to the reduction of wildland fire risks:

- **Livestock Grazing** in and around the communities of Adams County has led to a reduction of many of the fine fuels that would have been found in and around the communities and in the wildlands of Adams County. Domestic livestock not only eat these grasses, forbs, and shrubs, but also trample certain fuels to the ground where decomposition rates may increase. Livestock ranchers tend their stock, placing additional sets of eyes into the forests and rangelands of the county where they may observe ignitions, or potentially risky activities. Livestock grazing in this region should be encouraged into the future as a low cost, positive tool of wildfire mitigation in the Wildland-Urban Interface and in the wildlands.
- **Forest Management** in Adams County has been affected greatly by the reduction of operating sawmills in the region (see section 2.2). However, the active forest management program of Boise Corp., the Idaho Department of Lands, the US Forest Service and many of the private forestland owners in the region has led to a significant reduction of wildland fuels where they are closest to homes and infrastructure. An excellent example of this has already been highlighted in this document (Section 3.3) involving the Boise Corp management to the west of New Meadows along Highway 95. This management improved forest health, reduced the buildup of forestland fuels, and

provided for the effective treatment of logging residue. All of this management occurred in an area that if ignited could easily threaten many homes and other structures in the area. However, because of this treatment and others like it, the risk has been greatly reduced. In addition, forest resource professionals managing these lands, and the lands of the state and federal agencies are generally trained in wildfire protection and recognize risk factors when they occur. One of the reasons that Adams County has not been impacted by wildland fires to a greater degree historically, is the presence and activities related to active forest management.

- **Agriculture** is a significant component of Adams County's economy (see Section 2.2). Much of the rangeland interface is dotted and intermixed with agricultural crops, even extending to the forestland interface. The original conversion of these lands to agriculture from rangeland, was targeted at the most productive soils and juxtaposition to water. Many of these productive rangeland ecosystems were consequently also at some of the highest risk to wildland fires because biomass accumulations increased in these productive landscapes. The result today, is that much of the rangeland historically prone to frequent fires, has been converted to agriculture, which is at a much lower risk than prior to its conversion. The preservation of a viable agricultural economy in Adams County is integral to the continued management of wildfire risk in this region.

Table 4.4. WUI Action Items for People and Structures.

Action Item	Goals and Objectives	Responsible Organization	Action Items, Planning Horizon and Estimated Costs
4.4.a: Youth and Adult Wildfire Educational Programs	Protect people and structures by increasing awareness of WUI risks, how to recognize risk factors, and how to modify those factors to reduce risk	Cooperative effort including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Idaho Cooperative Extension Idaho Department of Lands USFS Payette National Forest and State and Private Forestry Office Bureau of Land Management Local School Districts 	To start immediately using existing educational program materials and staffing. Formal needs assessment should be responsibility of University of Idaho Cooperative Extension faculty and include the development of an integrated WUI educational series by year 3 (2006). Costs initially to be funded through existing budgets for these activities to be followed with grant monies to continue the programs as identified in the formal needs assessment.
4.4.b: Wildfire risk assessments of homes in identified communities	Protect people and structures by increasing awareness of specific risk factors of individual home sites in the at-risk landscapes. Only after these are completed can home site treatments follow.	To be implemented by County Commissioners Office in cooperation with the Rural Fire Departments and Wildland Fire Protection Specialists . Actual work may be completed by Wildfire Mitigation Consultants, fire district personnel, and others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost: Approximately \$100 per home site for inspection, written report, and discussions with the homeowners There are approximately 2,000 housing units in Adams County, roughly 80% of these structures would benefit from a home site inspection and budget determination for a total cost estimate of \$160,000. Action Item: Secure funding and contract to complete the inspections during years 1 & 2 (2004-05). Home site inspection reports and estimated budget for each home site's treatments will be a requirement to receive funding for treatments through grants.
4.4.c: Home Site WUI Treatments	Protect people, structures, and increase fire fighter safety by reducing the risk factors surrounding homes in the WUI of Adams County	County Commissioners in cooperation with Fire Mitigation Consulting company <i>Complete concurrently with 4.4.b.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actual funding level will be based on the outcomes of the home site assessments and cost estimates Estimate that treatments in rangelands will cost approximately \$1,000 per home site for a defensible space of roughly 150'. Approximately 575 homes in this category for an estimated cost of \$575,000. Median home and business assessed value in County is \$28,373 (average \$57,800): B/C Ratio of this treatment is approximately 27.8:1. Estimate that treatments in forestland will cost roughly \$2,500 per home site for a defensible space of about 250'. Approximately 715 homes in this category for an estimated cost of \$ 1,787,500. Median home and business assessed value in County is \$28,373 (average \$57,800): B/C Ratio of this treatment is approximately 23.1:1. Combined estimate for treatments of all homes and

Table 4.4. WUI Action Items for People and Structures.

Action Item	Goals and Objectives	Responsible Organization	Action Items, Planning Horizon and Estimated Costs
4.4.d: Community Defensible Zone WUI Treatments	Protect people, structures, and increase fire fighter safety by reducing the risk factors surrounding high risk communities in the WUI of Adams County	County Commissioners in cooperation with the USFS and BLM to identify funding availability and project implementation opportunities.	<p>businesses in at-risk areas will be in the range of \$ 2.3-\$2.4 million. Total assessed value of homes and businesses in county is approximately \$281.3 million (structures only). Overall B/C Ratio of this project is approximately 120:1 when viewed over all structures in county versus total program cost.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home site treatments can begin with the securing of funding for the treatments and immediate implementation in 2004 and will continue from year 1 through 5 (2008).
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actual funding level will be based on the outcomes of the home site assessments and cost estimates. Years 2-5 (2004-08): Treat high risk wildland fuels from home site defensible space treatments (4.4.c) to an area extending 400 feet to 750 feet beyond home defensible spaces, where steep slopes and high accumulations of risky fuels exist. Should link together home treatment areas. Treatments target high risk concentrations of fuels and not 100% of the area identified. To be completed only after or during the creation of home defensible spaces have been implemented. Communities to target: Cuprum, Bear, Evergreen, Fruitvale, Glendale, Hornet Creek, Meadow Creek, Meadows, Round Valley, Starkey. Others based on additional assessments. Approximate average cost on a per structure basis is \$1,500. When coupled with the home defensibility space costs of \$2,500, the average B/C Ratio in forestland areas is 14.4:1. These treatments would only be applied in rangeland areas in specific cases evaluated by request.
4.4.e: Maintenance of Home Site WUI Treatments	Protect people, structures, and increase fire fighter safety by reducing the risk factors surrounding homes in the WUI of Adams County	County Commissioners Office in cooperation with Rural Fire Departments and local home owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home site defensibility treatments must be maintained periodically to sustain benefits of the initial treatments. Each site should be assessed 5 years following initial treatment Estimated re-inspection cost will be \$50 per home site on all sites initially treated or recommended for future inspections Follow-up inspection reports with treatments as recommended years 5 through 10.

Table 4.4. WUI Action Items for People and Structures.

Action Item	Goals and Objectives	Responsible Organization	Action Items, Planning Horizon and Estimated Costs
4.4.f: Re-entry of Home Site WUI Treatments	Protect people, structures, and increase fire fighter safety by reducing the risk factors surrounding homes in the WUI of Adams County	County Commissioners Office in cooperation with Rural Fire Departments and local home owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-entry treatments will be needed periodically to maintain the benefits of the initial WUI home treatments. Each re-entry schedule should be based on the initial inspection report recommendations, observations, and changes in local conditions. Generally occurs every 5-10 years.
4.4.g: Access Improvements of bridges, cattle guards, and limiting road surfaces	Protection of people, structures, infrastructure, and economy by improving access for residents and fire fighting personnel in the event of a wildfire. Reduces the risk of a road failure that leads to the isolation of people or the limitation of emergency vehicle and personnel access during an emergency.	County Roads and Bridges Department in cooperation with US Forest Service, BLM, State of Idaho (Lands and Transportation), and industrial forestland owners (e.g., Boise Corp.).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1 (2004): Update existing assessment of travel surfaces, bridges, and cattle guards in Adams County as to location. Secure funding for implementation of this project (grants) • Year 2 (2005): Conduct engineering assessment of limiting weight restrictions for all surfaces (e.g., bridge weight load maximums). Estimate cost of \$100,000 which might be shared between County, USFS, BLM, State, and private based on landownership associated with road locations. • Year 2 (2005): Post weight restriction signs on all limiting crossings, copy information to rural fire districts and wildland fire protection agencies in affected areas. Estimate cost at roughly \$15-\$25,000 for signs and posting. • Year 3 (2006): Identify limiting road surfaces in need of improvements to support wildland fire fighting vehicles and other emergency equipment. Develop plan for improving limiting surfaces including budgets, timing, and resources to be protected for prioritization of projects (benefit/cost ratio analysis). Create budget based on full assessment.
4.4.h: Access Improvements for communities with one-way-in and one-way-out	Protection of people, structures, infrastructure, and economy by improving access for residents and fire fighting personnel in the event of a wildfire. Allows for alternative escape routes when a primary access is compromised.	County Roads and Bridges Department in cooperation with US Forest Service, BLM, State of Idaho (Lands and Transportation), and industrial forestland owners (e.g., Boise Corp.).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1 (2004): Update existing assessment of roads in Adams County as to location. Secure funding for implementation of this project (grants). • Year 2 (2005): Specifically address access issues in Cuprum, Bear, and others identified in assessment. Develop alternatives for improving access limitations. Landowners and agencies to play significant role in alternative development. • Year 3 (2006): Secure funding and implement projects to improve limiting access. No way to estimate costs until priorities are set and options identified.

Table 4.4. WUI Action Items for People and Structures.

Action Item	Goals and Objectives	Responsible Organization	Action Items, Planning Horizon and Estimated Costs
4.4.i: Access Improvements through road-side fuels management	<p>Protection of people, structures, infrastructure, and economy by improving access for residents and fire fighting personnel in the event of a wildfire. Allows for a road based defensible area that can be linked to a terrain based defensible areas.</p>	<p>County Roads and Bridges Department in cooperation with US Forest Service, BLM, State of Idaho (Lands and Transportation), and industrial forestland owners (e.g., Boise Corp.).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1 (2004): Update existing assessment of roads in Adams County as to location. Secure funding for implementation of this project (grants). • Year 2 (2005): Specifically address access issues to Cuprum, Bear, the Fruitvale-Glendale Corridor, and others identified in assessment. Approximately 62 structures in Cuprum and Bear currently, with approximate assessed value of \$2.1 million. Identify forestland and rangeland fuels difficult to control during wildfire that would also respond well to thinning, pruning, and brush cutting (hand pile and burn), while increasing ingress and egress use in wildfire emergencies. Target 100' on downhill side of roads and 75' on uphill side for estimated cost of \$15,000 per mile of road treated. If 10 miles of roadway are prioritized for treatment (est.) B/C Ratio of 14.3:1 is achieved. This B/C ratio may be maintained in many rural treatment areas of the county. The Fruitvale-Glendale Corridor would be significantly higher. • Year 3 (2006): Secure funding and implement projects to treat road-side fuels.

4.5 *Infrastructure*

Significant infrastructure refers to the communications, transportation (road and rail networks), energy transport supply systems (gas and power lines), and water supply that service a region or a surrounding area. All of these components are important to the West Central Highlands, and to Adams County specifically. These networks are by definition a part of the Wildland-Urban Interface in the protection of people, structures, **infrastructure**, and unique ecosystems. Without supporting infrastructure a community's structures may be protected, but the economy and way of life lost. As such, a variety of components will be considered here in terms of management philosophy, potential policy recommendations, and recommendations.

Communication Infrastructure: This component of the WUI seems to be diversified across the county with multiple source and destination points, and a spread-out support network. Although site specific treatments will impact directly local networks, little needs done to insure the system's viability.

Transportation Infrastructure (road and rail networks): This component of the WUI has some significant potential limitations in Adams County. All traffic flowing from north to south and vice versa in the state of Idaho must cross through a single intersection in New Meadows. While New Meadows is not necessarily a high risk community from a wildland fire standpoint, both Highway 95 and 55 pass through narrow, steep, two lane stretches, surrounded by heavy accumulations of forest fuels. Highway 55 passes through some hazardous areas from the Adams/Valley border to the community of Meadows. Highway 95 crosses through similar conditions from the Fruitvale turnoff, north to Tamarack, and then again from the Round Valley turnoff to Pinehurst.

Other roads in the county have limiting characteristics, such as steep grades, narrow travel surfaces, sharp turning radii, low load limit bridges and cattle guards, and heavy accumulations of fuels adjacent to, and overtopping some roads. Some of these road surfaces access remote forestland and rangeland areas. While their improvements will facilitate access in the case of a wildfire, they are not the priority for treatments in the county.

Roads that have these inferior characteristics and access homes and businesses are the priority for improvements in the county. Specific recommendations for these roads are enumerated in Table 4.4.

Energy Transport Supply Systems (gas and power lines): During the Hall Fire in Adams County, the high tension power lines maintained by Idaho Power that cross the region from the Snake River to McCall and then to Riggins were threatened by smoke and particulate matter in the smoke. The power lines were at risk to arcing and potentially failure. Fortunately, power was not lost to the communities of Adams and Valley counties as a result of the fire, but it did point to the need for an increased focus on fuels management under and immediately adjacent to the high tension power lines in this region (Appendix I). These lines are the sole source of power to McCall and surrounding communities. The Payette National Forest, Council Ranger District, manages some of the land that the existing power lines occupy and the location of the proposed new transmission lines along with many other landowners (Federal, State, and private). Since the Hall Fire, their attention has been acutely focused on improving fuels management in this WUI spotlighted issue.

As part of the on-going assessment of these areas, the Payette National Forest will develop a strategy to address these areas. This process will involve all owners in the area and represents an opportunity for collaboration while linking treatments across the affected areas. Once completed, it should be integrated into this planning document and incorporated into implementation time-lines.

Water Supply: In many of Idaho's communities, water is derived from surface flow that is treated and piped to homes and businesses. When wildfires burn a region, they threaten these watersheds by the removal of vegetation, creation of ash and sediment. As such, watersheds should be afforded the highest level of protection from catastrophic wildfire impacts. In Adams County, water is supplied to the majority of homes from single home or multiple home wells. Because of this, domestic water supply is not considered at-risk from wildfires in this county.

Agricultural water supply from the region's rivers and lakes is an important component of the viability of the regional economy (agriculture and ranching). These resources are at-risk to wildland fires. Their protection comes from the limiting of the extent and frequency of wildfires in any given watershed. Based on the analysis of past fires in Adams County and the current status of wildland fire protection in the region, this component of the economy seems to be stable and reasonably protected. Changes to the status quo are not recommended at this time, in light of the other recommendations in this plan.

4.6 Resource and Capability Enhancements

There are a number of resource and capability enhancements identified by the rural and wildland fire fighting districts in Adams County. For specific details on these comments, refer to sections 3.4.1 and 3.4.2. All of the needs identified by the districts are in line with increasing the ability to respond to emergencies in the WUI and are fully supported by the planning committee.

Specific repeated themes of needed resources and capabilities include:

- More water tenders for Rural Fire Districts
- Improved radio capabilities within each district and for mutual aid operations
- Retention and recruitment of volunteers
- Training and development of rural firefighters in structure and wildland fire
- New facilities (fire stations) for housing existing equipment (Council VFD) and forward advancing equipment and personnel to areas experiencing population growth (New Meadows VFD).

Although additional, and specific, needs were enumerated by the districts in Adams County, these items were identified by multiple districts (Table 4.5). The implementation of each issue will rely on either the isolated efforts of the rural fire districts or a concerted effort by the county to achieve equitable enhancements across all of the districts. Given historic trends, individual departments competing against neighboring departments for grant monies and equipment will not necessarily achieve county wide equity. However, the West Central Highlands Resource Conservation and Development Council may be an organization uniquely suited to work with all of the districts in Adams County and adjacent counties to assist in the prioritization of needs across district and even county lines. Once prioritized, the WCH RC&D is in a position to assist these districts with identifying, competing for, and obtaining grants and equipment to meet these needs.

Table 4.5. WUI Action Items in Fire Fighting Resources and Capabilities.

Action Item	Goals and Objectives	Responsible Organization	Action Items & Planning Horizon
4.5.a: Obtain 5,000 water tenders for rural fire districts (4).	Protection of people and structures by direct fire fighting capability enhancements.	West Central Highlands Resource Conservation and Development Council in cooperation with rural and wildland fire districts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1 (2004): Verify stated need still exists, develop budget, and locate funding or equipment (surplus) sources. • Year 1 or 2 (2004-05): Acquire and deliver needed equipment to districts based on prioritization by need and funding awards.
4.5.b: Enhance radio availability in each district, link in to existing dispatch, and improve range within the region	Protection of people and structures by direct fire fighting capability enhancements.	West Central Highlands Resource Conservation and Development Council in cooperation with rural and wildland fire districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1 (2004): Summarize existing two-way radio capabilities and limitations. Identify costs to upgrade existing equipment and locate funding opportunities. • Year 2 (2005): Acquire and install upgrades as needed. • Year 2-3 (2005-06): Identify opportunities for radio repeater towers located in the region for multi-county benefits.
4.5.c: facilities (buildings) for existing districts as expansion of a district, or increasing storage of existing facilities.	Protection of people and structures by direct fire fighting capability enhancements.	West Central Highlands Resource Conservation and Development Council in cooperation with rural and wildland fire districts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority Districts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Council VFD ○ New Meadows VFD • 5 Year Planning Horizon
4.5.d: Retention of Volunteer Fire Fighters	Protection of people and structures by direct fire fighting capability enhancements.	Rural and Wildland Fire Districts working with broad base of county citizenry to identify options, determine plan of action, and implement it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Year Planning Horizon, extended planning time frame • Target an increased recruitment (+10%) and retention (+20% longevity) of volunteers • Year 1 (2004): Develop incentives program and implement it.
4.5.e: Increased training and capabilities of fire fighters	Protection of people and structures by direct fire fighting capability enhancements.	Rural and Wildland Fire Districts working with the BLM and USFS for wildland training opportunities and with the State Fire Marshall's Office for structural fire fighting training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1 (2004): Develop a multi-county training schedule that extends 2 or 3 years in advance (continuously). • Identify funding and resources needed to carry out training opportunities and sources of each to

Table 4.5. WUI Action Items in Fire Fighting Resources and Capabilities.

Action Item	Goals and Objectives	Responsible Organization	Action Items & Planning Horizon
			acquire. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year 1 (2004): Begin implementing training opportunities for volunteers.

4.7 Regional Land Management Recommendations

In section 4.4 of this plan, reference was given to the role that forestry, grazing and agriculture have in promoting wildfire mitigation services through active management. Adams County is a rural county by any measure. It is dominated by wide expanses of forest and rangelands intermixed with communities and rural houses.

Wildfires will continue to ignite and burn fuels and homes depending on the weather conditions and other factors enumerated earlier. However, active land management that modifies fuels, promotes healthy range and forestland conditions, and promotes the use of these natural resources (consumptive and non-consumptive) will insure that these lands have value to society and the local region. We encourage the US Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Idaho Department of Lands, Industrial forestland owners, private forestland owners, and all other landowners in the region to actively manage their Wildland-Urban Interface lands in a manner consistent with the management of reducing fuels and risks in this zone.

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